DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 217 110 UD 022 288

AUTHOR Duff, Ogle B.; And Others
TITLE The Pros and Cons of Busing in Pennsylvania.
INSTITUTION Pittsburgh Univ., Pa. Race Desegregation Assistance Center.
PUB DATE Jan 82
NOTE 28p.; Appendixes deleted because of superfluous material and poor reproducibility. Some tables may be marginally legible due to small print.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Busing; *Community Attitudes; Consolidated Schools; Court Litigation; Desegregation Effects; Elementary Secondary Education; Expenditures; Racial Bias; *School Desegregation; *School District Reorganization; Social Influences; State Legislation; *Student Transportation
IDENTIFIERS Act 372 (Pennsylvania); *Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

Busing, or transporting students at public expense, has been practiced in the United States for over a century. The use of the term to mean transporting students for school desegregation purposes has been relatively recent. Most States started providing pupil transportation when legislation for school district consolidation was implemented, resulting in broader school district boundaries and increased student travel distances. Significantly, no substantial increases in busing have been observed since the courts ordered school desegregation. In Pennsylvania, busing is additionally mandated by Act 372 which requires school districts to transport (under certain distance criteria) nonpublic school students. Available data do not indicate whether students in the State are being bused because of school consolidation, desegregation, or Act 372. Opposition to busing in general and Act 372 in particular allegedly centers on the effects of busing on children's safety and welfare, academic and extracurricular activities, and travel time. In reality, resistance to busing is rooted in racism. A survey shows that Pennsylvania students are bused largely for reasons other than desegregation. Hence negative, desegregation oriented attitudes toward busing are misdirected myths that must be dispelled. (Author/MJL)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED217110

# THE PROS AND CONS OF BUSING IN PENNSYLVANIA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ogle B. Duff
Univ. of Pittsburgh
RDAC

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

Ogle B. Duff, Director
Marion L. Poole, Major Researcher
Janis Harrell
T. Glenn Hill
Cynthia E. Peterson
Samuel Werlinich

University of Pittsburgh
Race Desegregation Assistance Center

January 1982

UD 022 288

First Reproduction, 1982
Dr. Ogle B. Duff, Director
Dr. Marion L. Poole, Major Researcher
University of Pittsburgh
Race Desegregation Assistance Center

STAFF ROSTER

| | |
|---|---|
| DIRECTOR: | Dr. Ogle B. Duff |
| ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS: | Dr. Roland Barnes<br>Dr. James Mauch |
| STAFF SPECIALISTS: | Ms. Janis Harrell<br>Mr. T. Glenn Hill<br>Dr. Cynthia E. Peterson<br>Dr. Marion L. Poole<br>Dr. Samuel Werlinich |

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, or marital or handicapped status. This commitment is made by the University, and required by federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including Title IX, 86.9.

The Center is a service of the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh. It is funded by Title IV, Section 403 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to assist elgible school districts in examining problems of school desegregation relating to instruction, curriculum, administration, school personnel, and in planning of projects that effectively deal with such problems. The Center's services are available to all elgible school districts in the states of Pennsylvania and Delaware. Further information is available by calling:

(412) 624-5865

TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| FOREWORD | i |
| The Pros and Cons of Busing in Pennsylvania | 1 |
| Myths, Pros and Cons About Busing | 8 |
| Conclusions | 18 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 20 |

## ILLUSTRATIONS


Figure PAGE

1. Decrease in Number of Public School Districts in the United States 1929-30 to Fall 1970 . . . . . 6

2. Percent of Total Number of Students Transported at Public Expense 1928-30 -- 1978-79 . . . . . 7


## LIST OF TABLES


1. Year of Statutory Authorization for School Consolidation by State, 1838-1913 . . . . . 2

2. Year of Statutory Authorization for Public Pupil Transportation by State, 1869-1918 . . . . . 3

3. Number of Local Basic Administrative Units (School Districts) and Number of Public and Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools: United States, 1929-30 to Fall 1970 . . . . . 4

4. Numbers and Percent of Public School Students Transported at Public Expense and Current Expenditures for Transportation: United States, 1929-30 -- 1978-79 . . . . . 5

5. November 1981 Telephone Survey of Selected School Districts in Pennsylvania: Percent of Students Transported at Public Expense . . 16

# FOREWORD

School policies regarding busing have been caught up in the politics of desegregation. Students have been transported on the little yellow bus since the turn of the century. Yet, the question of the ride was seldom challenged until the buses were ordered as a vehicle for moving black and white children to a common "turf." The following study was prepared at the request of the Pennsylvania Legislative Office of Research and the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Research to ascertain the prevailing arguments of proponents for and opponents to busing. The study further examines the historical background of school transportation as it evolved in this country.

One of the difficulties encountered by staff as we analyzed the data was the sorting out of myth from fact. The code word "busing" has a pejorative impact which appears to be built on negative emotionalism. On the other hand transportation which is provided, at least in Pennsylvania, for students who travel up to ten miles beyond school district lines is perceived as an enhacement for the educational programs of some school districts. This privilege becomes deleterious to school district desegregation efforts when it enables students to avoid court ordered desegregation in their own district and, at enormous district expense, travel to another district or to a private school. Act 372 authorized travel is often longer and more expensive to the taxpayers than the court ordered travel for district-wide desegregation. The question then becomes: Is transportation the problem? or are there other factors impacting and influencing this process in a negative manner?

This study aims to weigh the pros and cons of school transportation to determine realistically and rationally what school issues are really involved.

Ogle Burks Duff, Ph.D.
Director

The Pros and Cons of Busing in Pennsylvania

The transportation (busing) of public school students, at public expense has been an ongoing issue in public education within the United States for over one hundred years. Long before desegregation or race raised the emotional level of the busing controversy, state legislatures throughout the nation were consistently and persistently pushing local school districts toward school consolidation and, eventually, the present yellow school bus. The Pennsylvania state legislature no less than the other state legislatures has over the years required the inefficient local school district to consolidate into larger district configurations. One of the carrots in this process has been the states' willingness to reimburse districts, by formula, for public school student transportation costs.

Before we can intelligently examine the pros and cons of busing in Pennsylvania we must first examine, from a historical perspective, national and state trends relating to public education that have contributed to the steady increase in the transportation (busing) at the states' expense of public school students.

In the context of this paper the two terms "transportation" and "busing" will be used interchangeably to mean movement of student by vehicle for any purpose. Within the emotional context of school desegregation, however, protagonists frequently use the term "busing" to mean transporting black or white students for the purpose of school desegregation.

School Consolidation and Transportation (Busing)

By the year 1913 all 48 states had statutes requiring school district consolidation. The earlist Pennsylvania consolidation statute was passed in 1901.

(See Table 1.) More were to follow.

Table 1

Year of Statutory Authorization for School Consolidation by State, 1838-1913

| Date | State | Date | State |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1838 | Massachusetts | 1901 | California |
| 1839 | Connecticut | 1901 | Missouri |
| 1843 | Michigan | 1901 | Minnesota |
| 1844 | Vermont | 1901 | Pennsylvania |
| 1847 | Ohio | 1902 | Louisiana |
| 1853 | New York | 1903 | Virginia |
| 1854 | Maine | 1903 | Tennessee |
| 1856 | Wisconsin | 1903 | Oregon |
| 1857 | New Hampshire | 1903 | Oklahoma |
| 1861 | Delaware | 1904 | Maryland |
| 1873 | Iowa | 1905 | Illinois |
| 1873 | Indiana | 1907 | Arizona |
| 1885 | North Carolina | 1907 | New Mexico |
| 1836 | New Jersey | 1908 | Kentucky |
| 1889 | Florida | 1908 | West Virginia |
| 1889 | Nebrask | 1909 | Colorado |
| 1890 | Washington | 1910 | Alabama |
| 1893 | Texas | 1910 | Mississippi |
| 1896 | Utah | 1911 | Arkansas |
| 1896 | South Carolina | 1911 | Georgia |
| 1897 | Kansas | 1913 | Montana |
| 1898 | Rhode Island | 1913 | South Dakota |
| 1899 | North Dakota | 1913 | Wyoming |
| 1900 | Idaho | 1913 | Nevada |

Source: J. F. Abel, Consolidation of Schools and Transportation of Pupils, Bulletin No. 41 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, 1923), p. 22.

As more and more states required school districts to consolidate, more and more states passed transportation laws, realizing that larger districts needed assistance in getting students to school. "By 1900, 18 states had some sort of pupil transportation law, and by 1919 pupil transportation at public expense was legal in all 48 states."[1] In some states consolidation laws preceded transportation laws, but in 14 states consolidation laws and transportation were passed simultaneously.[2] Pennsylvania passed its first public pupil transportation law in 1897. (See Table 2.) In actuality the public law pertaining to

[1]Nicolaus Mills, ed., The Great School Bus Controversy, Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York and London, 1973, p. 4.

[2]Ibid

Table 2

Year of Statutory Authorization for Public Pupil Transportation by State, 1869-1918

| Date | State | Date | State |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1869 | Massachusetts | 1903 | Virginia |
| 1876 | Vermont | 1904 | Maryland |
| 1880 | Maine | 1905 | Oklahoma |
| 1885 | New Hampshire | 1905 | Utah |
| 1889 | Florida | 1907 | Missouri |
| 1893 | Connecticut | 1908 | West Virginia |
| 1894 | Ohio | 1909 | Colorado |
| 1895 | New Jersey | 1910 | Mississippi |
| 1896 | New York | 1911 | Arkansas |
| 1897 | Iowa | 1911 | Georgia |
| 1897 | Nebraska | 1911 | Illinois |
| 1897 | Pennsylvania | 1911 | North Carolina |
| 1897 | Wisconsin | 1912 | Kentucky |
| 1898 | Rhode Island | 1912 | South Carolina |
| 1899 | Kansas | 1912 | Arizona |
| 1899 | North Dakota | 1913 | Idaho |
| 1899 | South Dakota | 1913 | Tennessee |
| 1899 | Indiana | 1915 | Nevada |
| 1901 | California | 1915 | Alabama |
| 1901 | Minnesota | 1915 | Texas |
| 1901 | Washington | 1916 | Louisiana |
| 1903 | Michigan | 1917 | New Mexico |
| 1903 | Montana | 1919 | Delaware |
| 1903 | Oregon | 1919 | Wyoming |

Source: J. F. Abel, Consolidation of Schools and Transportation of Pupils, Bulletin No. 41 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, 1923), p. 22.

pupil transportation in Pennsylvania preceded the first school consolidation law by four years.

From 1931-32 through 1970 the total number of public school districts in the United States made a steady but dramatic decrease from 127,531 in 1931 to 17,995 in 1970. (See Table 3.) School district merger and consolidation at the states' prodding were concomitant with a steady yearly increase in the percentage of public school students bused at public expense. From 1929-30 until 1979 the average percent increase in numbers of public school students bused at public expense was .0095 each year.

By 1979 more than 55% of public school students in the United States were bused to and from school at public expense. (See Table 4.)

Other researchers have documented the gradual rise in percentage of public school students bused at public expense. Notably one such study, undertaken by

Table 3

Number of Local Basic Administrative Units (School Districts), and Number of Public and Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools: United States, 1929-30 to Fall 1970

| School Year | Public School Systems | | | | Nonpublic Schools | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | School Districts[2] | Elementary schools | | Secondary schools | Elementary | Secondary |
| | | Total | 1-teachers | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 1929-30 | [3] | 238,306 | 149,282 | 23,930 | 9,275 | 3,258 |
| 1931-32 | 127,531 | 232,750 | 143,391 | 26,409 | 9,734 | 3,289 |
| 1933-34 | [3] | 236,236 | 139,166 | 24,714 | 9,992 | 3,327 |
| 1935-36 | | 232,174 | 131,101 | 25,652 | 9,992 | 3,327 |
| 1937-38 | 119,001 | 22,660 | 121,178 | 25,467 | 9,992 | 3,327 |
| 1939-40 | 117,108 | [3] | 113,600 | [3] | 11,396 | 3,568 |
| 1941-42 | 115,493 | 183,112 | 107,692 | 25,123 | 10,285 | 3,011 |
| 1943-44 | 111,383 | 169,905 | 96,302 | 28,973 | 10,285 | 3,011 |
| 1945-46 | 101,382 | 160,227 | 86,563 | 24,314 | 9,863 | 3,294 |
| 1947-48 | 94,926 | 146,760 | 75,096 | 25,484 | 10,071 | 3,292 |
| 1949-50 | 83,718 | 128,225 | 59,652 | 24,542 | 10,375 | 3,331 |
| 1951-52 | 71,094 | 123,763 | 50,742 | 23,746 | 10,656 | 3,322 |
| 1953-54 | 63,057 | 110,875 | 42,865 | 25,637 | 11,739 | 3,913 |
| 1955-56 | 54,859 | 104,427 | 34,964 | 25,046 | 12,372 | 3,887 |
| 1957-58 | 47,594 | 95,446 | 25,341 | 25,507 | 13,005 | 3,994 |
| 1959-60 | 40,520 | 91,853 | 20,213 | 25,784 | 13,574 | 4,061 |
| 1961-62 | 35,676 | 81,910 | 13,333 | 25,350 | 14,762 | 4,129 |
| 1963-64 | 31,795 | 77,584 | 9,895 | 26,431 | [3] | 4,451 |
| 1965-66 | 26,983 | 73,216 | 6,491 | 26,597 | [4]15,340 | [4]4,606 |
| 1967-68 | 22,010 | 70,879 | 4,146 | 27,011 | [4]14,900 | [4]4,400 |
| Fall 1970 | 17,995 | 66,849 | 2,143 | 26,282 | [4]14,400 | [4]4,200 |

NOTE: Beginning in 1959-60, includes Alaska and Hawaii

Source: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Statistics of State School Systems, Fall Statistics of Public Schools, and Statistics of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1970, (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1972.) Hereinafter cited as 1970 NEW Education Statistics.

the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, attributed the rise in bused students to the following factors:

1. Population growth 95%
2. Centralization 3%
3. Safety 1%
4. Desegregation 1%
5. Other 1%

In, 'Must We Bus,' Gary Orfield, the author states,

> Despite the belief of most Americans that busing for desegregation is massive, expensive, and abnormal, it is a small part of the national students transportation enterprise, which is itself a minor segment of the vast undertaking of public education. Quite apart from desegregation, the majority of American children do not walk to school; they ride, usually on a school bus.

Table 4

Number and Percent of Public School Transported at Public Expense, and Current Expenditures for Transportation: United States, 1929-30 to 1978-79

| School Year | All Public school pupils | Pupils transported at public expense | | Expenditure of public funds | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Number | Percent of total | Total excluding capital outlay (in thousands) | Average cost per pupil transported |
| 1929-30 | 25,678,015 | 1,902,826 | 7.4 | $54,823 | $28.81 |
| 1931-32 | 20,275,441 | 2,419,173 | 9.2 | 58,078 | 24.01 |
| 1933-34 | 26,434,193 | 2,794,724 | 10.6 | 53,908 | 10.29 |
| 1935-36 | 26,367,098 | 3,250,658 | 12.3 | 62,653 | 19.27 |
| 1937-38 | 25,975,108 | 3,769,242 | 14.5 | 75,637 | 20.07 |
| 1939-40 | 25,433,542 | 4,144,161 | 16.3 | 83,283 | 20.10 |
| 1941-42 | 25,562,473 | 4,503,081 | 18.3 | 92,922 | 20.64 |
| 1943-44 | 23,266,616 | 4,512,412 | 19.4 | 107,754 | 23.88 |
| 1945-46 | 23,299,941 | 5,056,968 | 21.7 | 129,756 | 25.66 |
| 1947-48 | 23,944,532 | 5,854,041 | 24.4 | 176,265 | 30.11 |
| 1949-50 | 25,111,427 | 6,947,384 | 27.7 | 214,504 | 30.88 |
| 1951-52 | 26,562,664 | 7,697,130 | 29.0 | 268,827 | 34.93 |
| 1953-54 | 25,643,671 | 8,411,719 | 32.8 | 307,437 | 36.55 |
| 1955-56 | 27,740,149 | 9,695,819 | 35.0 | 353,972 | 36.51 |
| 1957-58 | 29,722,275 | 10,861,689 | 36.5 | 416,491 | 38.34 |
| 1959-60 | 32,477,440 | 12,225,142 | 37.6 | 486,338 | 39.78 |
| 1961-62 | 34,682,340 | 13,222,667 | 38.1 | 576,351 | 43.59 |
| 1963-64 | 37,405,058 | 14,475,778 | 39.7 | 673,845 | 46.55 |
| 1965-66 | 39,154,497 | 15,536,567 | 39.7 | 787,358 | 50.68 |
| 1967-68 | 40,827,955 | 17,130,873 | 42.0 | 981.006 | 57.27 |
| 1969-70 | 41,934,376 | 18,198,577 | 43.4 | 1,218,557 | 66.96 |
| 1971-72 | 42,254,272 | 19,474,355 | 48.1 | 1,507,830 | 77.43 |
| 1973-74 | 41,438,054 | 21,347,039 | 51.5 | 1,858,141 | 87.04 |
| 1975-76[1] | 41,269,720 | [2]21,772,483 | 52.8 | 2,377,313 | 109.19 |
| 1977-78[1] | 40,079,390 | [2]21,800,000 | 54.4 | 2,731,041 | 125.28 |
| 1978-79 | 39,073,232 | [2]21,800,000 | 55.8 | 3,195,689 | 148.59 |

[1]Some figures have been revised since originally published.

[2]Estimated by the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services and published on December-January issues of School Bus Fleet.

Note - Data on pupil transportation through 1951-52 are based upon enrollment data for 1953-54 and subsequent years are based upon average daily attendance.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Statistics of State School Systems: Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education and unpublished data, 1981.

> School busing has been increasing steadily for decades, much of it caused by the movement of white families into thinly populated areas.[1]

The two sources cited above attributed the rise in percentage of students bused nationally to an increase in population and a large scale movement of white families into sparsely settled areas (suburbs.) Our research would indicate that, addi-

---

[1]Cary Orfield, Must We Bus: Segregated Schools and National Policy, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC 1978, p. 128.

tionally, much of the increase in public student busing can be attributed to the national movement, carried out through state statutes mandating school consolidation.

As the total number of school districts decreased because of school district consolidation, the total number and percentage of students bused increased. The two line graphs that follow depict the decrease in total number of school districts and the steady increase in number and percentage of students bused.

FIGURE 1

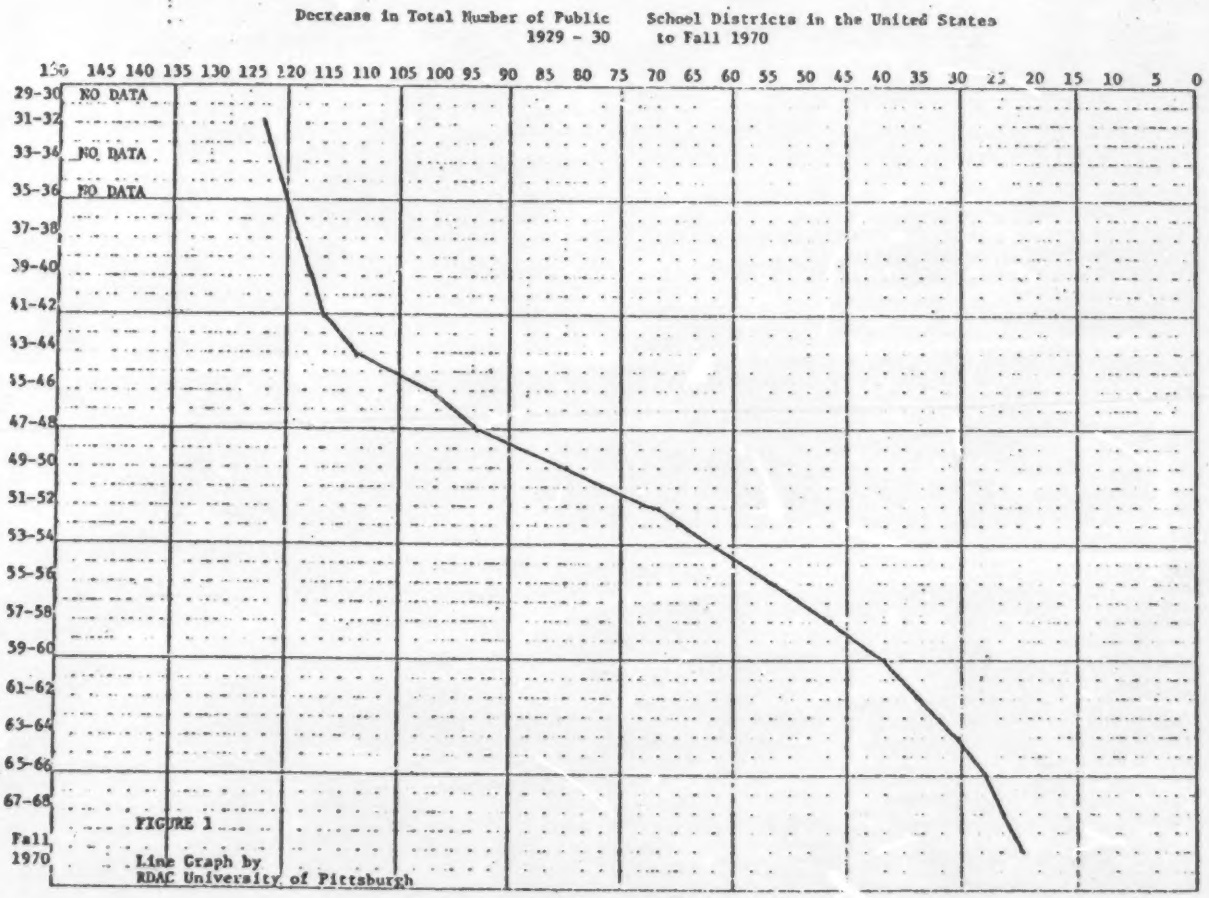
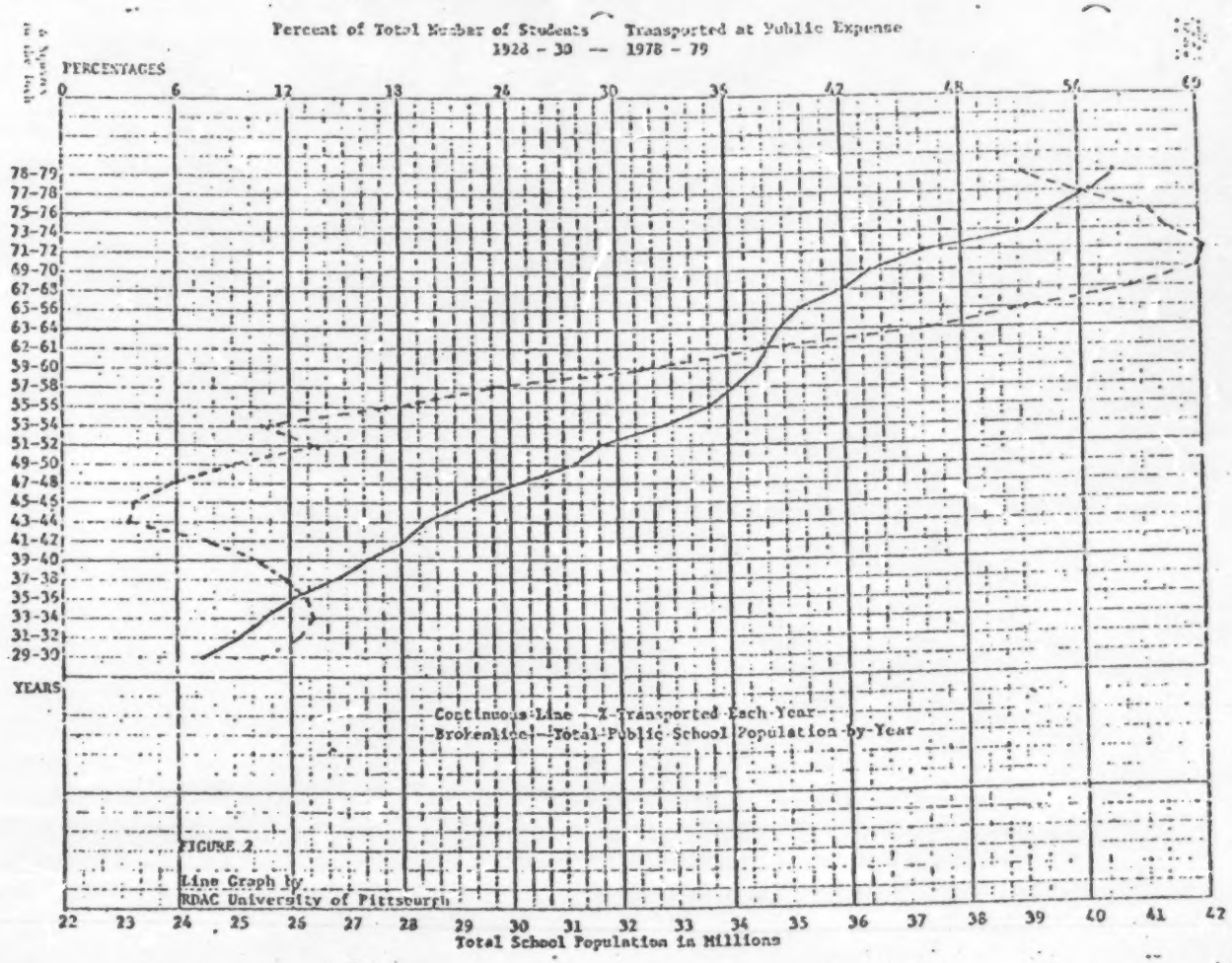


FIGURE 2




In figure 1 the line graph illustrates the drop in total number of school districts in the United States from about 127,000 in 1930 to about 18,000 in 1970. In figure 2 the line graph indicates a progressive increase in the rise of the public student population nationally and also a progressive increase in the percentages of public school students bused. As the total student population rose and the total number of school districts nationally decreased because of school consolidation, the percentage of students bused nationally also rose. It would take an indepth research study to determine which portion -- school population rise or school consolidation increase -- had the greater impact on the persistent rise in numbers and percentages of students bused during the period 1929-30 to 1978-79. However, one fact is clear -- as the boundaries

of school districts became ever wider -- the need for pupil busing increased. That factor alone should account for a large part of the percentage growth of the number of students bused at public expense.

In examining figure 2 it is noteworthy to observe that no significant increase in busing occurred after the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision on school desegregation. In actuality the percentage of the student population bused after Brown decreased slightly. From 1929-30 until 1954 the average yearly increase in students bused was .0095; after Brown the yearly increase averaged .009.

Myths, Pros and Cons about Busing

The issue of busing in Pennsylvania, as well as nationally, has been surrounded by many myths and misleading statements. A pattern of fears and myths has become fixed in the mind of the public. This has made it hard to determine what is true and what is not. In reviewing the literature, the National Education Association, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and Gary Orfield, author of Must We Bus?, among others, have summarized these fears and myths, i.e., pros and cons of busing.

The arguments either for busing or against busing, as stated above, are the same generally, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as they are in any other part of the United States.

The United States Supreme Court established in Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education that once de jure segregation is found in a school district and there is a significant degree of segregation residentially, then the remedy may include busing.[1]

---

[1]The United States Commission on Civil Rights, School Desegregation: The Courts and Suburban Migration. A Consulation Report. p. 66.

In those cases where the courts have included busing as a part of the remedy, they have done so far a sound reason: namely, to correct a constitutional violation.[1] This has been true in Pennsylvania as well as throughout the country. (See Appendix A.) This section will address some of the pros and cons about "busing" that are pertinent to Pennsylvania as well as to the rest of the nation.

1. Con - Children have the right to attend a "neighborhood" school.

   Pro - Pennsylvania as well as many other states has a history of passing legislation requiring school districts to consolidate. (See Appendix B.) The resultant school district consolidations created large school districts thereby necessitating transportation provisions for students. Act 372 passed in 1972 by the Pennsylvania state legislature sounded the death knell for the remaining vestiges of the "neighborhood" school.

   Under Act 372 school districts must provide transportation for non-public school students -- if they provide transportation for their own students -- up to ten miles beyond the districts' boundaries.[2] This act has raised a furor in various parts of the state and is under constant attack by the public and the schools. (See Appendix C.) The concept of the neighborhood school is a cherished myth difficult to dislodge.

2. Con - Busing creates serious safety risks for children.

   Pro - Statistics from the National Safety Council as well as those of the

---

[1] The United States Commission on Civil Rights, "Your Child and Busing." Clearinghouse Publications No. 36 May 1972, p. 10.

[2] Pennsylvania Act of December 28, 1972, P.L. 1726, No. 372, amending 1361 of the Public School Code of 1949.

Pennsylvania Department of Education support the finding that "busing students" is safer than having them walk. The National Safety Council has stated.

> The school bus is safer to travel in than your own automobile, an airplane, buses (other than school buses), or a passenger train.[1]

3. Con - When children become ill in school, they are out of reach of their parents.

   Pro - Sometimes children do become ill or have accidents while at school. But this doesn't happen often. When it does happen, school authorities are responsible for seeing that the child gets immediate attention. The Harrisburg, PA schools prepared the following procedure to be followed in the event a child becomes ill or injured while in school.

> The school nurse will be called immediately for preliminary diagnosis and treatment. A parent will be called if warranted. If a parent is unable to pick up the child, the school district will provide transportation to take the child home.[2]

   Generally similar procedures are carried out throughout the state. School officials in Pennsylvania are particularly careful in caring for a sick or injured child especially when the illness occurs on school premises.

4. Con - Fights and racial clashes often occur on buses.

   Pro - Wherever there are large groups of children, there will be some pushing and shoving. This will happen wherever children gather — at home, on the playground, or at school. In a desegregated setting, racial overtones are attributed to minor incidents that are often overblown. In

---

[1]The United States Commission on Civil Rights, "Your Child and Busing," Clearinghouse Publications, No. 36 May 1972, p. 13.

[2]Ibid, p. 12.

September 1981 the Pittsburgh Public Schools instituted desegregation at the middle school level. Monitors were placed on buses. As a result only minor incidents occurred. The Race Desegregation Assistance Center has planned and implemented many inservice programs for bus drivers and monitors in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and other cities. Where good planning takes place, very few "incidents" occur on buses transporting students for desegregation purposes.

5. Con - Busing requires children to spend too much time on the bus.

   Pro - Well thought out and planned bus routes can reduce the time children spend getting to and from school. This is especially true where children are no longer bused past one segregated school to get to another. School consolidation in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation frequently has required children to travel longer distances and to spend more time on the bus than any desegregation plan. (See Appendix D.)

6. Con - Busing is too expensive.

   Pro - A school bus is not inexpensive. But pupil transportation is not so big an item in a school's budget as opponents of busing would have the public believe. After the original outlay, the bus can be and is often used for other educational purposes including field trips and extracurricular activities such as sports.

   In Erie, PA officials stated:

> Contributing to the smooth implementation of the desegregation plan were two factors: (1) the desegregation plan called for a small increase in busing; and (2) busing when needed, is currently handled by the public transportation system and subsidized by the school district.[1]

---

[1]The United States Commission on Civil Rights, "School Desegregation in Erie, Pennsylvania," May 1977, p. 17.

Additionally, most school systems are already transporting students because of prior district consolidation and have bus transportation systems in place.

7. Con - Busing prevents students from taking part in extracurricular activities.

   Pro - There is no reason that this should occur. The history of districts that have desegregated successfully includes provision for students of all races to take part in extra-curricular activities. This is commonly done through establishing an "activity bus" that provides transportation for students taking part in extra-curricular activities. The Race Desegregation Assistance Center has assisted school district personnel, in desegregating school districts, in developing and implementing inservice programs in the area of extra-curricular activities. The inservice included developing guidelines for establishing such an activity bus.

8. Con - Minority Americans are just as opposed to busing as majority Americans.

   Pro - This is a myth not supported by the facts. Throughout the country where desegregation suits have been brought against school boards, minority parents and groups, like the NAACP and the Urban League, have been in the forefront. Minority parents and those who represent them have generally opposed one way busing. They have opposed busing where minority students would bear the burden of the bus trip. Whether in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, or Erie, Pennsylvania minority groups have long fought for school desegregation and for equality of the burden of desegregation, i.e., two way busing.

9. Con - Busing would carry children into dangerous neighborhoods where drugs, crime, and violence are common place.

   Pro - The notion that drugs, crime, and violence are only to be found in inner-city neighborhoods is fallacious. Suburban schools are just

as likely to have drug related problems as any inner-city school. Federal Bureau of Investigation statistics show that in the matter of crime there is no boundary. It is the responsiblity of school officials to see that students attend school in safety wherever the schools are located.[1]

10. Con - Busing penalizes white students by setting them back until others can "catch up."

Pro - In 1977 a massive indepth study on desegregation was published under the auspices of the National Institute of Education. One of its conclusions was:

> Attribution of negative educational effects to mandatory student transportation for desegregation is unwarranted by research evidence thus far available. Claims to the contrary have not been supported by sustantive evidence.[2]

Even more recently, a research report on academic achievement of black and white students in the recently desegregated New Castle (DE) County Schools found that:

> The fact that student academic work, as measured by achievement tests, has improved since 1978 is not news. Test results released by local school officials for the past three years showed steady increase in student scores.
>
> But the Michigan study analyzed the results by race, which has not been done -- at least officially -- by local school officials.
>
> The breakdown by race shows that white test scores on elementary level improved dramatically, said Robert Green, the head of the university's urban

---

[1]The United States Commission on Civil Rights, "Your Child and Busing," Clearinghouse Publications, No. 36 May 1972, p. 17.

[2]Myer Weinberg, Minority Students: A Research Appraisal, National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1977, p. 109.

affairs program. Green said test scores for black elementatry school students also increased, but to a lesser degree.[1]

The following editorial appeared in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette in July of 1981. It neatly sum up the pros and cons of busing in Pennsylvania as well as throughout the nation:

Busing and Hypocrisy

Opponents of school busing keep insisting their resistance has nothing to do with race, that their concern is for the riding safety of students, the distances that have to be traveled, etcetera, etcetera. The latest example is coming in the New District, the court-ordered merger of four predominantly white east suburban school districts with the General Braddock district.

But every once in a while something happens that knocks such explanations into a cocked hat. One longstanding example is the pressure from parochial and private schools that impelled the state Legislature to pass and to perpetuate Act 372, under which the Pittsburgh school district must transport non-public students not only within the city but also to any school within a 10-mile perimeter around the city's boundaries.

And now parents in the Banksville, Beechview and Brookline areas have successfully persuaded the city school district to reverse itself and continue to provide bus service to Brashear High School. The district had sought to bring Brashear into conformance with its requirement that high school students must live at least two miles from school to qualify for busing.

The busing for these close-by students has been provided ever since Brashear opened in 1976 because the street and sidewalk approaches to the school are inadequate and dangerous. And to be perfectly fair in Brashear's case, it is a well-integrated school so that race did not play a factor in the parental effort.

But what it shows is that busing, per se, is not the question, since millions of students everywhere around the United States are bused each day. No, the resistance comes from parents and legislators who don't want to come

---

[1]Wilmington, Delaware, News Journal, 10 October 1981, p. A-1.

> right out and say that what they do not like isn't busing but, rather, the fact that at the end of the ride their children will be in classes with black children. By whatever name it is called, that amounts to racism.[1]

In 1961 the Pennsylvania legislature passed legislation establishing the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC.)[2] The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court ruled in 1967 that PHRC was legally constituted to deal with the matter of racial imbalance in Pennsylvania public schools. By 1972 PHRC had cited twenty-six school districts for maintaining racially imbalanced schools.[3]

Each of the cited districts was transporting students at public expense. Pertinent information on student transportation in these districts would yield valuable current data as to the extent that students are being transported for purpose of school desegregation.

The Race Desegregation Assistance Center at the University of Pittsburgh sought to collect current data on the percentage of students being transported for purposes of desegregation in the cited school districts. In November 1981 a telephone survey was conducted seeking answers to the following questions:

1. How many students are in your district?
2. How many students are bused in your district?
3. How many students are bused for purposes of school desegregation?
4. How many students are bused for purposes other than school desegregation?

Seventeen of the districts responded to question one and two. Each of the seventeen districts stated that information pertaining to questions three and

---

[1] Pittsburgh Post Gazette, 24 July 1981, Editorial Page.

[2] Louis Mackey H., "The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and Desegregation in the Public Schools of Pennsylvania 1961-1978," Ph.D. dissertation, p. 39.

[3] Ibid, pp. 61-63.

four was either confidential or not available.

Table five represents the results of the telephone survey. Enrollment figures representing the number of students in each district have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest full point. The Woodland Hills District has been included since it has been recently reorganized and is moving toward full desegregation. Several conclusions can be drawn from table five. (See Table 5.)

Table 5

November 1981 Telephone Survey of Selected School Districts in Pennsylvania
Percent of Students Transported at Public Expense

| SCHOOL DISTRICTS | TOTAL ENROLLMENT | NUMBER TRANSPORTED | TOTAL PERCENT OF STUDENTS TRANSPORTED |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Aliquippa | 2,200 | 900 | 41.0 |
| 2. Allentown | 14,500 | 1,000 | 7.0 |
| 3. Central Dauphin* | 9,400 | 10,500 | 111.0 |
| 4. Clairton | 1,500 | 300 | 20.0 |
| 5. Duquesne | 1,300 | 800 | 62.0 |
| 6. Erie | 14,300 | 2,100 | 15.0 |
| 7. Farrell Area | 1,500 | 400 | 27.0 |
| 8. Greater Johnstown | 5,600 | 3,900 | 70.0 |
| 9. Harrisburg | 9,200 | 5,400 | 59.0 |
| 10. McKeesport Area | 6,000 | 4,800 | 80.0 |
| 11. Norristown Area | 6,800 | 2,000 | 29.0 |
| 12. Penn Hills Township | 10,000 | 8,400 | 84.0 |
| 13. Philadelphia | 224,000 | 6,700 | 3.0 |
| 14. Pittsburgh | 45,700 | 29,700 | 63.0 |
| 15. Susquehanna Township | 2,300 | 300 | 13.0 |
| 16. Uniontown Township | 4,700 | 300 | 6.0 |
| 17. Woodland Hills** | 8,200 | 5,300 | 64.0 |
| TOTALS | 367,200 | 82,800 | Av.% 23.0 |

Source: University of Pittsburgh Race Desegregation Assistance Center, 1981.

*Exceeds 100% due to large numbers of students being transported under Act 372
**Not cited by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

1. There is a wide divergence in the numbers of students in some districts and the total numbers of students transported. Two examples are Philadelphia where 3.0 percent of the students are transported and Central Dauphin where 111.0 percent of students are transported. In the case of Philadelphia this equals 6,700 students, and for Central Dauphin it equals 10,500 students. Central Dauphin is transporting large numbers of students under Act 372. In fact, the total students transported in Central Dauphin exceeds the total number in the district.
2. It is not possible to discern whether students are being transported because of school reorganization, desegregation, or for purposes of Act 372. None of the districts surveyed was able or willing to divulge information pertaining to reasons for busing specific numbers of students.
3. The number of students in a district is not a criteria for number of students bused. In districts with smaller numbers of students more students may be bused because of larger distances between homes and schools, for safety purposes, or for other reasons.

The nine districts not responding to questions two, three, and four were:

| | District | Enrollment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Coatsville | 7,400 |
| 2. | New Kensington Arnold | 3,400 |
| 3. | Southeast Delco | 4,600 |
| 4. | Washington | 2,500 |
| 5. | Wilkinsburg | 2,700 |
| 6. | William Penn | 5,200 |
| 7. | York | 6,900 |
| 8. | Chester Upland | 8,800 |
| 9. | New Castle | 5,000 |
| | TOTAL | 42,500 |

The total enrollment above added to those in table five indicates an aggregate of 403,700 students in the cited districts, including Woodland Hills. Statistics released by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for 1980 indicated there are 2,368,756 public and non-public school students in the state. Of this total 1,556,734 (66.%) are bused. This data indicates that the preponderance of students who are bused in Pennsylvania are in districts other than those originally cited by PHRC. Students are being bused for reasons other than desegregation.

## Conclusions

1. Pennsylvania has a long history of passing legislation requiring school districts to consolidate.
2. School consolidation in Pennsylvania has resulted in larger school entities thereby requiring transportation of students.
3. In 1972 the Pennsylvania State Legislators passed Act 372 which requires school districts under certain conditions to bus non-public students. Act 372 has resulted in large numbers of students being transported in Pennsylvania for reasons other than school desegregation.
4. The pros and cons of busing in Pennsylvania are the same, generally, as they are throughout the country.
5. School districts in Pennsylvania originally cited by PHRC to desegregate are either unwilling to divulge or do not have information available on numbers of students bused for purposes of desegregation, Act 372, or school reorganization.
6. The preponderance of students bused in Pennsylvania, public and non-public, are in school districts not cited for racial imbalance.

Based on the data and other information revealed by this research, Act 372 is not only controversial, it is viewed as burdensome by the school district and by the general public. Much of the negativism about busing for desegregation in Pennsylvania is misdirected from busing under Act 372. There just isn't that much busing for purposes of school desegregation occuring in Pennsylvania.

Finally, barring the political implications, an indepth study on reasons for busing students in Pennsylvania would yield current up to date information on busing facts in the state, thereby dispelling the myths about busing.

# B I B L I O G R A P H Y


Anderson, William. "This Board Member Says We Can't Run Away From the Problem." American School Board Journal. (October 1981): p. 23.

Bosman, Boyd. "Coleman and Busing, New Misunderstanding About an Old Issues." N.E.A. November 27, 1978.

"Busing and Hypocrisy." Pittsburgh Post Gazette. Editorial 7 July 1981.

Crain, Robert L. The Politics of School Desegregation. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968.

Hughes, Larry W.; Gordon, William M.; and Hillman, Larry W. Desegregating America's Schools. New York: Longman Inc., 1980.

Jones, Leon. From Brown to Boston Desegregation in Education 1954-75. Vols. I and II. New Jersey: The Scare Crow Press, Inc., 1979.

Mackey, Louis H. "The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and Desegregation in the Public Schools of Pennsylvania 1961-1978." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1978.

Mills, Nicolaus. The Great School Bus Controversy. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1973.

Mondale, Walter F. "Busing in Perspection." The New Republic. March 11, 1972. pp. 16-19.

Orfield, Gary. Must We Bus? Washington, DC: The Brookings Institiution, 1978.

Rist, Ray C., ed. Desegregated Schools. New York: Academic Press, 1979.

"Test Scores Show Rise Since Desegregation." Wilmington News Journal 10 October 1981. p. A-1.

The Editors. "Busing for Racial Balance." Harvard Educational Review. 45 (February 1975): 1-4.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights. Your Child and Busing. Clearinghouse Publications, No. 36 May 1972.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights. Racial Isolation in the Public Schools. Government Printing Office, Vol. I. 1967.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights. School Desegregation: The Courts and Suburban Migration. A Consultation. Washington, DC. December 8, 1975.

The United States Commission on Civil Rights. School Desegregation in Erie Pennsylvania. A Staff Report. May 1977.

United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. A National Conference 1977. School Desegregation in Metropolitan Areas: Choices and Prospects. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1977.

Weinberg, Meyer. Minority Students: A Research Appraisal. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1977.

Willie, Charles V., and Greenblat, Susan L. Community Politics and Educational Change. New York, NY: Longman, Inc. 1981.